

Application no. 09/911,674
Amendment dated: August 23, 2004
Reply to office action dated: May 21, 2004

Amendments to the Claims

Please cancel claims 69-90 and 111-135.

Listing of Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Claims 69 - 90 (Cancelled).

91. (Previously presented) A method for operating a database search system, the method comprising:

receiving a request from an advertiser to change one or more bids associated with search listings stored in a search database, each search listing including a search term and a bid chargeable to the advertiser upon receipt of a click through by a searcher presented with search results including the search listing, the search results displayed to the searcher according to a display rank following receipt of a search query including the search term;

receiving a new bid amount for one or more search listings;

determining new current bid amounts for the one or more search listings;

determining display rank values for the one or more search listings;

determining a bid amount needed to become the highest ranked search listing

associated with the search term of the one or more search listings; and

displaying search listing information of the advertiser.

92. (Previously presented) The method of claim 91 further comprising:

displaying data associated with the one or more search listings in a tabular format.

93. (Previously presented) The method of claim 92 further comprising:

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displaying data associated with respective search listings in respective rows of a table;

displaying search terms of the respective search listings in a first column of the table;

displaying a current bid amount of the respective search listings in a second column of the table;

displaying a current rank of the respective search listings in a third column of the table; and

displaying a current bid amount needed to become the highest ranked search listing of the respective search listings in a fourth column of the table.

94. (Previously presented) The method of claim 93 further comprising:
displaying a new bid input field in a fifth column of the table.

95. (Previously presented) The method of claim 94 wherein receiving a new bid amount comprises detecting data entered by the advertiser in the new bid input field.

96. (Previously presented) A method of enabling a network information provider to update information relating to a search listing on a search result list generated by a computer network search engine, the method comprising:

maintaining an account database having at least one account record for each of a plurality of network information providers, said account record including
at least one search listing having a search term,
an account identifier, and
a bid amount chargeable to an account of the network information provider upon receipt of a retrieval request from a searcher for information relating to a search listing of the network information provider on a search result list;

receiving from a network information provider a change request for a search listing in the network information provider's account;

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updating the search listing in the network information provider's account record in response to the change request; and

determining a position substantially in real time for the updated search listing in a search result list generated by the search engine in response to a search request received from a searcher using the computer network, where the search term of the updated search listing generates a match with the search request and the position of the updated search listing in the search result list is determined using the bid amount.

97. (Previously presented) The method of claim 96, where the search term of each search listing in the search result list generates a match with the search request.

98. (Previously presented) The method of claim 97, wherein the search listings in the search result list are sorted in order of decreasing bid amount.

99. (Previously presented) The method of claim 98, further comprising assigning an ordinal rank value to each search listing in the search result list in order of decreasing bid amount, with the smallest rank value assigned to the search listing in the search result list having the highest bid amount, and the largest rank value assigned to the search listing having the lowest bid amount.

100. (Previously presented) The method of claim 98, further comprising:
determining creation time value for each search listing in the account database;

identifying search listings within a search result list having equivalent bid amounts; and

within a group of search listings within a search result list that have equivalent bid amounts, sorting the search listings in order from earliest to most recent creation time value.

101. (Previously presented) The method of claim 96, wherein the account record further includes an account balance.

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102. (Previously presented) The method of claim 101, wherein the account balance is positive.

103. (Previously presented) The method of claim 101, further comprising subtracting the bid amount from the account balance substantially in real time when a search listing is selected by the searcher from the search result list.

104. (Previously presented) The method of claim 101, where the search listing further comprises a web site title, a web site description, and a web site Uniform Resource Locator (URL).

105. (Previously presented) The method of claim 104, further comprising recording a retrieval request event substantially in real time when a search listing is selected by a remote searcher from the search result list.

106. (Previously presented) The method of claim 105, wherein the retrieval request event comprises an account identifier, and a bid amount.

107. (Previously presented) The method of claim 106, wherein the retrieval request event further comprises a search term.

108. (Previously presented) The method of claim 106, wherein the retrieval request event further comprises a web site URL.

109. (Previously presented) The method of claim 106, wherein the retrieval request event further comprises a rank value.

110. (Previously presented) The method of claim 106, further comprising applying a charge to an account balance, where the charge corresponds to a bid amount recorded in a retrieval request event having an account identifier that matches the account identifier corresponding to the account balance.

Claims 111 - 135. (Cancelled)